



PROVINCETOWN

Barnstable County



[NARRATIVE](#)
[GEOGRAPHY](#)
[GOVERNMENT](#)
[DEMOGRAPHICS](#)
[HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS](#)
[TRANSPORTATION](#)
[CULTURE AND RECREATION](#)
[MISCELLANEOUS](#)



NARRATIVE

Narrative

The Town of Provincetown was incorporated in 1727, but its history begins much earlier since its well protected harbor offered excellent protection from storms. The European explorer Gosnold recorded a stop in Provincetown as early as 1602 and the harbor was the site of the first landing of the Mayflower. The Pilgrims signed the Mayflower compact in the harbor, to codify the way in which they were going to administer the new colony they intended to establish. Although rich fishing grounds resulted in the seasonal leasing of fisheries with licenses granted for bass, mackerel and cod fishing, the first permanent settlement didn't take place until 1700. Provincetown grew very slowly during the 18th century and its population fluctuated with the price of fish. Farming was of secondary importance and aside from the fishing industry, there were only some salt works and one mill. After the Revolution, the town boomed and its population rose 276.6% between 1790 and 1830. Despite its relative lack of good farm land, by the middle of the 19th century, Provincetown had developed as the prime maritime, fishing and commercial center of the Cape. The Civil War, which destroyed so much New England business, only provided more markets for Provincetown's fish. Portuguese sailors, picked up by American ships in the Azores and Cape Verde Islands to fill out their crews, came to Provincetown to live and additional Portuguese immigrants had moved to town by the 19th century to work on the whaling boats and coastal fishing vessels. In 1875, there were 25 coastwise and 36 ocean vessels operating in town, more than any community in the state including Boston. Provincetown was a bustling place with all of the ancillary maritime businesses operating, such as ship chandlers, shipwrights, sail makers, caulkers, riggers and blacksmiths.

The picturesque setting and salt air also began attracting artists and writers by the end of the 19th century. This contingent grew and poets, novelists, journalists, socialists, radicals and dilettantes formed a colony which in 1915 opened the Provincetown Players in a converted fish house on the wharf. Among the writers whose works were performed there was Eugene O'Neill. When the fishing industry faltered from competition with cheaper Nova Scotia cod, and the Portland Gale of 1898 swept away half of the town's wharves, the resort population of the town provided jobs to take the place of those lost. In the 1920's the artistic and literary productions of the town were of international repute and the abandoned sites of maritime businesses became the new homes of the seasonal visitor as sail lofts, warehouses and barns became studios, galleries and shops. Today, the wealth of preserved historic buildings combines with the lure of the sea to support a huge tourist and summer home industry.

(Seal supplied by community. Narrative based on information provided by the Massachusetts Historical Commission)



GEOGRAPHY

Location

Situated on the northern tip of Cape Cod, Provincetown is bordered by Truro on the east and surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean on all other sides. It is 49 miles north of Hyannis, 78 miles east of Plymouth, 114 miles southeast of Boston, and 290 miles from New York City.

Total Area: 17.47 sq. miles

Land Area: 9.66 sq. miles

Population: 3,561

Density: 369 per sq. mile

Climate

(National Climatic Data Center)

(Provincetown Station)

Normal temperature in January.....29.4°F

Normal temperature in July.....70.7°F

Normal annual precipitation.....43.3"

U.S.G.S. Topographical Plates

Provincetown

Regional Planning Agency

Cape Cod Commission

Metropolitan Statistical Area

(1993 Definition)



GOVERNMENT

Municipal Offices

Main Number: (508) 487-7000

[Telephone Numbers for Public Information](#)

Form of Government

Board of Selectmen

Town Manager

Open Town Meeting

Year Incorporated

As a town: 1727

Registered Voters (Secretary of State 1994)

	Number	%	
Total Registered	2,832		
Democrats	1,382	48.8	%
Republicans	162	5.7	%
Other parties	0	0.0	%
Unenrolled Voters	1,288	45.5	%

Legislators

[Senators and Representatives by City and Town](#)



DEMOGRAPHICS

Table DP-1. Profile of General Demographic Characteristics: 2000

Geographic Area: Provincetown town, Barnstable County, Massachusetts

[For information on confidentiality protection, nonsampling error, and definitions, see text]

Subject	Number	Percent	Subject	Number	Percent
Total population.....	3,431	100.0	HISPANIC OR LATINO AND RACE		
SEX AND AGE			Total population.....	3,431	100.0
Male.....	1,839	53.6	Hispanic or Latino (of any race).....	74	2.2
Female.....	1,592	46.4	Mexican.....	19	0.6
Under 5 years.....	60	1.7	Puerto Rican.....	27	0.8
5 to 9 years.....	67	2.0	Cuban.....	3	0.1
10 to 14 years.....	87	2.5	Other Hispanic or Latino.....	25	0.7
15 to 19 years.....	112	3.3	Not Hispanic or Latino.....	3,357	97.8
20 to 24 years.....	127	3.7	White alone.....	2,954	86.1
25 to 34 years.....	459	13.4	RELATIONSHIP		
35 to 44 years.....	780	22.7	Total population.....	3,431	100.0
45 to 54 years.....	744	21.7	In households.....	3,101	90.4
55 to 59 years.....	239	7.0	Householder.....	1,837	53.5
60 to 64 years.....	146	4.3	Spouse.....	326	9.5
65 to 74 years.....	312	9.1	Child.....	370	10.8
75 to 84 years.....	195	5.7	Own child under 18 years.....	250	7.3
85 years and over.....	103	3.0	Other relatives.....	72	2.1
Median age (years).....	45.4	(X)	Under 18 years.....	17	0.5
18 years and over.....	3,158	92.0	Nonrelatives.....	496	14.5
Male.....	1,697	49.5	Unmarried partner.....	295	8.6
Female.....	1,461	42.6	In group quarters.....	330	9.6
21 years and over.....	3,082	89.8	Institutionalized population.....	49	1.4
62 years and over.....	695	20.3	Noninstitutionalized population.....	281	8.2
65 years and over.....	610	17.8	HOUSEHOLD BY TYPE		
Male.....	261	7.6	Total households.....	1,837	100.0
Female.....	349	10.2	Family households (families).....	465	25.3
RACE			With own children under 18 years.....	165	9.0
One race.....	3,327	97.0	Married-couple family.....	326	17.7
White.....	3,004	87.6	With own children under 18 years.....	102	5.6
Black or African American.....	258	7.5	Female householder, no husband present.....	98	5.3
American Indian and Alaska Native.....	11	0.3	With own children under 18 years.....	49	2.7
Asian.....	17	0.5	Nonfamily households.....	1,372	74.7
Asian Indian.....	1	-	Householder living alone.....	977	53.2
Chinese.....	3	0.1	Householder 65 years and over.....	267	14.5
Filipino.....	2	0.1	Households with individuals under 18 years.....	175	9.5
Japanese.....	2	0.1	Households with individuals 65 years and over.....	463	25.2
Korean.....	2	0.1	Average household size.....	1.69	(X)
Vietnamese.....	4	0.1	Average family size.....	2.65	(X)
Other Asian ¹	3	0.1	HOUSING OCCUPANCY		
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.....	-	-	Total housing units.....	3,890	100.0
Native Hawaiian.....	-	-	Occupied housing units.....	1,837	47.2
Guamanian or Chamorro.....	-	-	Vacant housing units.....	2,053	52.8
Samoa.....	-	-	For seasonal, recreational, or		
Other Pacific Islander ²	-	-	occasional use.....	1,828	47.0
Some other race.....	37	1.1	Homeowner vacancy rate (percent).....	4.0	(X)
Two or more races.....	104	3.0	Rental vacancy rate (percent).....	9.9	(X)
<i>Race alone or in combination with one</i>			HOUSING TENURE		
<i>or more other races:³</i>			Occupied housing units.....	1,837	100.0
White.....	3,096	90.2	Owner-occupied housing units.....	988	53.8
Black or African American.....	278	8.1	Renter-occupied housing units.....	849	46.2
American Indian and Alaska Native.....	27	0.8	Average household size of owner-occupied units.....	1.85	(X)
Asian.....	22	0.6	Average household size of renter-occupied units.....	1.50	(X)
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.....	1	-			
Some other race.....	118	3.4			

- Represents zero or rounds to zero. (X) Not applicable.

¹ Other Asian alone, or two or more Asian categories.

² Other Pacific Islander alone, or two or more Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander categories.

³ In combination with one or more of the other races listed. The six numbers may add to more than the total population and the six percentages may add to more than 100 percent because individuals may report more than one race.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.



HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

Home Sales (Banker & Tradesman) -

[Town Stats - Free market Statistics](#)

Subsidized Housing Units (DHCD 1998)

[DHCD Subsidized Housing Inventory](#)

Subsidized Housing Units: The number of housing units which count toward the municipality's 10% goal for low- and moderate-income housing. It includes both subsidized affordable units and market rate units in certain eligible subsidized developments.

Public Housing Units (DHCD 1999)

Conventional State:	32
Conventional Federal:	0

Rental Assistance(DHCD 1999)

State (MRVP:	0
Federal (Section 8):	0



TRANSPORTATION

TRANSPORTATION AND ACCESS

Provincetown is situated on Cape Cod, a 65-mile long sandy peninsula comprising Barnstable County. The Cape has excellent highway, rail, bus and air connections to other parts of New England. Air, bus, and passenger rail service expand during the summer months to accommodate the large numbers of tourists.

Major Highways

Principal highways are U.S. Route 6, the Mid Cape Highway, and State Route 6A.

Rail

There is no freight rail service, but the network of intermodal facilities serving Eastern Massachusetts and Rhode Island is easily accessible.

Bus

Provincetown is a member of the Cape Cod Regional Transit Authority (CCRTA), which operates a b-bus demand response service. The Plymouth and Brockton Street Railway Company provides two trips daily between Provincetown and Boston.

Other

The Provincetown Municipal Airport, a Commercial Service (CM) facility located 2 mi. NW of town, has a 3,498'x 100' asphalt runway. Instrument approaches available: Precision and non-precision. The Plymouth and Brockton Street Railway Company provides two bus trips daily between Provincetown and Logan Airport.



CULTURE AND RECREATION

LIBRARIES

[Board of Library Commissioners On-line Library Catalog](#)

MUSEUMS

(American Association of Museums)

Pilgrim Monument and Provincetown Museum, Cape Cod Pilgrim

Memorial Association

High Pole Hill

(508) 487-1310

Provincetown Art Association and Museum

460 Commercial Street

(508) 487-1750

Provincetown Heritage Museum

356 Commercial Street

(508) 487-7098

RECREATION

[Telephone Numbers for Public Information](#)

Recreational Facilities (Recreational sites and activities)

[Department of Environmental Management Recreation Section](#)



MISCELLANEOUS

HEALTH FACILITIES

(Dept. of Public Health 1992)

Hospitals

None

Long Term Care

Cape End Manor

Hospices

None

Rest Homes

None

UTILITIES

[Telephone Numbers for Public Utilities](#)

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NOTE: The COMMUNITY PROFILE draws information from a diversity of sources. The main source of information is listed under each section. In some instances comments submitted by the municipality were incorporated to correct and/or enhance the information obtained from the main source. However, no changes were made to those data bases which must be consistent throughout the state. DHCD has made efforts to ensure the accuracy of all data in the COMMUNITY PROFILES, but cannot take responsibility for any consequences arising from the use of the information contained in this document.